

**CLAIMS**

1. A ball striking practice apparatus which comprises:  
a strikable ball mounted on a cord;  
a pole to which said ball is tethered by said cord; and  
a ball positioner mounted on said cord;  
said ball positioner being disposed on said cord between said ball and said pole,  
and comprising a generally flat triangular resilient and integral member having routing  
means on two sides thereof to route said cord between said ball and said pole in a  
substantially straight path;  
whereby said ball may be repeated struck causing said cord to repeatedly wind  
around and resile from said pole for extended periods without imparting undue stress  
within said cord.
2. Apparatus as in Claim 1 wherein said cord comprises a flexible metal strand.
3. Apparatus as in Claim 2 wherein said metal strand comprises a steel or  
aluminum strand.
4. Apparatus as in Claim 1 wherein said metal strand is sheathed.
5. Apparatus as in Claim 4 wherein said sheath comprises a polymer or elastomeric  
material.
6. Apparatus as in Claim 1 wherein said sheath extends over substantially an entire  
length of said metal strand.
7. Apparatus as in Claim 1 comprising a pair of said routing means on said member,  
each said routing means comprising a tubular channel formed along an edge of said  
member with one end thereof disposed adjacent said ball.

8. Apparatus as in Claim 7 further comprising a pair of said tubular channels, disposed on adjacent edges of said member with one end of each channel disposed adjacent said ball.
9. Apparatus as Claim 8 wherein said member comprises an elastomeric material or a fabric web.
10. Apparatus as in Claim 9 wherein said channel comprises the hollow elongated interior of a rolled edge of said member.
11. Apparatus as in Claim 7 wherein said ball and said ball positioner are both slidable along said cord.
12. Apparatus as in Claim 11 wherein said cord traverses sequentially through one said routing, through said ball, and through a second said routing, said cord being aligned in said substantially straight line up to entering said ball and from exiting said ball.
13. Apparatus as in Claim 1 further comprising said cord traversing through said ball twice and having a loop between traverses.
14. Apparatus as in Claim 13 wherein said loop encompasses 180° between said traverses.
15. Apparatus as in Claim 13 further comprising a recess in said ball between traverses and said loop being at least partially seated in said recess.
16. Apparatus as in Claim 15 wherein said loop is fully seated in said recess.
17. Apparatus as in Claim 16 wherein when seated fully in said recess said loop does not protrude beyond the surface of the ball.

18. Apparatus as in Claim 13 further comprising a recess in said ball between traverses and an insert seated in said recess, said loop being at least partially seated in said insert.
19. Apparatus as in Claim 18 wherein said loop is fully seated in said insert.
20. Apparatus as in Claim 1 wherein said ball comprises a baseball, softball, soccer ball, tennis ball, squash ball, handball or other strikable ball.
21. A ball striking practice apparatus which comprises:
  - a strikable ball slidably mounted on a cord;
  - a pole to which said ball is tethered by said cord;
  - a ball positioner slidably mounted on said cord, said ball positioner being disposed on said cord between said ball and said pole, and comprising a generally flat triangular resilient and integral member having routing means on two sides thereof to route said cord between said ball and said pole in a substantially straight path;
  - said cord comprising a flexible metal wire; and
  - said cord having two ends, each end being removably attached to said pole;whereby said ball may be repeatedly struck causing said cord to repeatedly wind around and resile from said pole for extended periods without imparting undue stress within said cord and said ends of said cord may be movably attached to said pole at different positions dependent upon the nature of said ball and its manner of being struck.
22. Apparatus as in Claim 21 wherein said metal strand comprises a steel or aluminum strand.
23. Apparatus as in Claim 22 wherein said metal strand is sheathed with a polymer or elastomeric material over substantially its entire length.

24. Apparatus as in Claim 21 comprising a pair of said routing means on said member, each said routing means comprising a tubular channel formed along an edge of said member with one end thereof disposed adjacent said ball.
25. Apparatus as Claim 21 wherein said member comprises an elastomeric material or a fabric web.
26. Apparatus as in Claim 25 wherein said fabric web comprises a belting fabric.
27. Apparatus as in Claim 21 wherein said cord traverses sequentially through one said routing, through said ball, and through a second said mounting, said cord being aligned in said substantially straight line up to entering said ball and from exiting said ball.
28. Apparatus as in Claim 27 further comprising said cord traversing through said ball twice and having a loop encompassing 180° between traverses.
29. Apparatus as in Claim 28 further comprising a recess in said ball between traverses and said loop being partially or fully seated in said recess.
30. Apparatus as in Claim 28 further comprising a recess in said ball between traverses and an insert seated in said recess, said loop being partially or fully seated in said insert.
31. Apparatus as in Claim 21 wherein said ball comprises a baseball, softball, soccer ball, tennis ball, squash ball, handball or other strikable ball.